585 the wedding returned home or stayed with strangers or in a special house for a period.
606 There were numerous taboos for the wife with regard to her in-laws, especially the older ones (prohibition to speak to them, or to address them by name, etc.), to a certain extent also for the husband with regard to his parents-in-law, until he was "reconciled"
576 with them. Very strict rules governed the behavior of the married couple in the presence of others; they could not call each other by name, and any show of affection was considered bad form.

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585 [585] the meantime the bride is handed over to the female relatives of the groom, who bring her to her new home.[59]

Honey is given to the bride a second time, symbolizing the sweetness of married life that one and all wish her.

● [606] The bride then sits down on a special bridal chair, and a kettle is placed at her feet as a sign of her subjection to the mother of the household.[60]

The custom of thrice walking round the hearth, the custom that plays such an important role in the Abkhaz, Cherkess, Ossete, and Ingush marriage,[61] is found also among the Lesghians, but, as it seems, only by way of exception. Kovalevskij found it only in one *aul* near the Georgian border.[62]

Toward midnight, when the banqueting has finished, a brother of the bride is given the honour of unveiling her face, her head remaining veiled till she enters the bridal chamber. For this privilege her brother is obliged to bestow a special gift on her.[63, 64]

She now steps into the bridal chamber, while the young people crowd in after her. Whoever succeeds in being the first to throw himself on the bed receives some pastries as prize. This ceremony is called *vurui varis*, that is, "trampling on the bed."[65]

As soon as the groom enters, all leave the room and while the newly-weds are alone, feasting and merry-making continue till morning.[66]

In some parts of Daghestan, as for example in Samur Province, two relatives stand guard at the door of the bridal chamber. On the following day the *testimonium castitatis*, a cloth or a bed sheet, is given to the guards[67] or, in some places, the young husband fires his gun. However, a pistol shot does not always have the same meaning. In Dargwa Province (in the shamkhalate of Tsrk and in the khanate of Mekhtali) it signifies that the bride's hymen has been found perforated;[68] in Sakataly it has the very opposite signification.[69] If the bride is found unchaste, the husband may dismiss her at once, on her very wedding day, retaining all her gifts and dowry. Formerly her angry father would cut off her nose or arm and even kill her.[70]

The wedding may last for another week.[71]

On the seventh day a feast is prepared for an exclusive group of male relatives, on which occasion the groom's father reveals what gift he intends to bestow on his newly married son. (The women relatives hold their own feast.)

[59] Byhan, *La civilisation caucasienne*, pp. 191 f.
[60] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 187.
[61] Dirr, AGKB, p. 25.
[62] Kovalevskij, *l. c.*
[63] Amirov, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
[64] The Laks call it *lyazbinkuku* (Kovalevskij, *l. c.*).
[65] Kovalevskij, *l. c.* Amirov calls it *burush-vachis*: *burush* meaning "bad" and *vachis* meaning "trample on."
[66] Gabiev, *op. cit.*, p. 110; Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 187; Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 571.
[67] "Adaty Južno-Dagestanskich Obščestv," SSKG, VIII (1875), p. 72.
[68] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 174.
[69] *ibid.* See also Kovalevskij, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 187 f; Gabiev, *op. cit.*, p. 110; Amirov, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
[70] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 201.
[71] Gabiev, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

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585 * See also T. Mtavriev, "Prostonarodnaja svad'ba v Kachetii," SMOMPK, XXXI (1902), No. 3, pp. 154—160.

For Gurian customs: N. Deržavin, Svad'ba u Gurijcev-Musul'man v okrestnostjach Batuma," SMOMPK, XXXI (1902), No. 2, pp. 168—176.

For Pshav customs see: Makalatija, "Iz starogo narodnogo byta pšavov," SE, 1938, No. 1, pp. 105—109.

** The tribes in this column are intended merely to serve as *examples*. We do not wish to imply that the particular custom is not found anywhere else except among the tribes indicated.

The OSSETINE wedding customs are quite interesting and have been fully described by such authors as Kovalevskij,[78] Baddeley,[79] Hahn,[80] Šanaev,[81] and Gatiev.[82] Without going into detail we shall indicate briefly the similarity between the Ossetine wedding and that of the neighbouring North Caucasians.

(1) The *procession* terminates at the home of the groom. The bride is led by her groomsman (*anshuargin*) and a special female attendant (*dzhinarkinmade*).[83]

(2) The formal contract is made in church before their priests in Christian parts of Ossetia,[84] and according to Islamic ritual among the Mohammedans. Both Christian and Mohammedan marriages may take place in the shade of certain holy trees.[85]

[583] (3) Dramatization of bride-stealing.[86]

(4) The bride and groom are not allowed to meet during the marriage festivities: the bride must remain in her room, attended to by a number of girl-friends, while the groom is living with the best-man.[87]

[606] (5) Submission to the mother-in-law. In the evening the bride is led to the hearth, where she must first bow to the *avsin* (mother of the household) and then smear some fat on the *avsin's* shoes as a sign of submission.[88]

585 842 (6) A child is placed on her lap, as a wish of her friends that she may give birth to many children, especially boys.[89] She is taken to a shrine of Mairem.

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[78] Kovalevskij, *Sovremmenyj obyčaj i drevnij zakon.*

[79] Baddeley, *The Rugged Flanks of Caucasus.*

[80] Hahn, *Bilder aus dem Kaukasus*, pp. 41 ff.

[81] Šanaev, "Svad'ba u severnych Osetin," ("A Wedding among the North Ossetes"), SSKG, IV (1870), pp. 1—30.

[82] Gatiev, "Sueverija i predrazudki u Osetin," SSKG, IX (1876), pp. 18—21. See also: Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, pp. 334—337; "Koe-čto o Digorcach," *Kavkaz* (1887), No. 339 f.

[83] Byhan, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

[84] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, p. 268.

[85] Nansen, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

[86] Kovalevskij, *Coutume contemp.*, 168 f.

[87] Šanaev, *op. cit.*, p. 27, *note 13*. Cf. also N. Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 336.

[88] Gatiev, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Polidaev, Gorcy severnago Kavkaza, p. 106.

[89] Kovalevskij, *Coutume contemp.*, p. 185.

## TABLE 16

### Marriage Ceremonies of N. Caucasians And Neighbours

| Marriage Ceremonies | Procession | | | Dramatization of capture | Horse-racing | Both sibs (families) present | Groom absent for large part of wedding | Segregation of bride during wedding | Bride's submission to husband | Wedding elaborate, expensive with much feasting & dancing | Mother-in-law † | | Corset ceremony | Proof of Virginity | Child placed on bride's lap | Special wishes for boys | Fire-place ceremony | Gifts to bride from own sib | "Trumping on bed" ceremony | Sword placed over bride's head | Special attendant for groom | Special attendant for bride | Mother plays important rôle | Maternal uncle important rôle | Formal religious contract | Reconciliation ceremony | Predominant Character of Ceremonies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | From groom's house to bride | Return with bride to groom's house | Groom is absent | | | | | | | | Invites bride to cross threshold | Offers bride some honey | Bride's submission to | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Abkhaz | + | + | – | | + | + | | + | | + | + | + | | + | | + | + | + | – | + | | + | – | – | + | | Pastoral |
| Cherkess | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | – | – | + | + | Pastoral |
| Ingushi | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | | + | | ~ | + | + | + | + | – | | + | + | – | – | + | | Pastoral |
| Other Chechens | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | | + | | | + | + | ? | + | – | | + | + | – | – | + | | Pastoral |
| Avars | + | + | + | + | | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | · | | ? | + | + | | + | + | + | – | + | | Pastoral + Agrarian |
| Dargwa | + | + | + | + | | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | | | ? | + | + | | + | + | + | – | + | | Pastoral + Agrarian |
| Other Lesghians | + | + | + | + | | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | | | | + | + | | + | + | + | – | + | | Pastoral + Agrarian |
| Khevsurs | + | + | | + | | + | | | | | | | | + | | | + | | – | | | | + | – | + | | Pastoral + Agrarian |
| Pshavs * | + | + | – | | | + | | | | + | + | + | | + | | + | + | + | – | | + | + | + | – | + | | Pastoral + Agrarian |
| Tushi | | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | | | | + | + | | |
| Ingiloi | + | + | | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | + | – | | | |
| Ossetes | + | + | | + | | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | – | – | + | | Pastoral |
| Karachai | | | | + | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Cf. Makalatija. "Iz starogo narodnogo byta Pšavov," SE, 1938, No. 1, pp. 105.

† It is usually the mother-in-law.

585 [583] [326] [606] [842]

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## § 2. PROBLEMS AND CONCLUSIONS

Though the wedding ceremonies just described are not without a few traces of a mother-right culture, the wedding as a whole is doubtless typically patriarchal in character.

(1) The wedding procession clearly shows that the marriage is patrilocal, a fact true of all North Caucasian as well as neighbouring tribes. The bride must move into the house of her father-in-law.

(2) The fact that the bride is humiliated before her mother-in-law (not father-in-law), the fact that she is invited into the household by the mother-in-law (not father-in-law), and that it is the mother-in-law (not father-in-law) who places the honey into the mouth of the bride, though very suspiciously matriarchal, is reconcilable with a strictly patriarchal society. Even in a strictly patriarchal society the mother of the household enjoys certain privileges and is looked upon as the mistress of the house with special authority over the female members of the household. In other words, in these seemingly matriarchal ceremonies the mother-in-law may perhaps be simply excercising a right of the mother of the household of a typical patriarchal family.[103]

(3) The dramatization of bride capture is a very common custom among the pastoral peoples throughout the world.

Ceremonial bride capture must not be considered as a survival of actual marriage by capture. This is especially true of the Caucasians because a wedding always means a great economic loss for the bride's family—one of their workers must leave them and go over to another sib. Ceremonial bride capture expresses rather the opposition to such an heavy loss. The Dido, as we have seen, actually throw mud and filth at the bride after she has been " stolen ". If the ceremony were to represent actual abduction, why should the bride be so " mistreated " ? The reason why filth is thrown at her is that she has turned " traitor " to her own family.

(4) The ceremony of hiding, veiling of the face, the bride's taciturnity—all these little peculiarities of the Caucasian wedding may be an expression of the bride's natural sense of modesty. Till now she had to avoid, at least in public, the slightest communication with her financé. The strict separation of engaged couples, the prohibition even to pass a glance at one's future mate in public, and the death penalty imposed on the girl for pre-marital intercourse—all this is in full accord with the high esteem of pastoral peoples for the physical integrity of virgins. At the wedding, the bride is being publicly introduced into a relationship which she has been taught to shun as disgraceful, even punishable by death. Now this once " disgraceful " thing is being done publicly ! The bride's resistence, her fleeing, her veiling, her taciturnity, then, are expressions of a reaction against " the great change "[104] from maidenhood to wife, a change more sensibly felt among pastoral peoples than in any other society.

[103] For the relatively important rôle of a mother of a household in a patriarchal society see E. Pčelina, " Obrjad gostepriimstva v Osetii," SE, (1932), No. 5—6, pp. 140—163, especially p. 156, *note*.

[104] " The great change," I think, has been coined by Elsie C. Person. See her " Holding back in Crisis Ceremonialism," *American Anthropologist*, n. s. XVIII (1916), pp. 44 f.

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(7) In a number of instances we have noticed that the dagger or sword was used in connection with the marriage ceremony. The best-man took the bride around the hearth and each time he struck the chain with his dagger. The bride had to enter her new home under an arch of swords or with a dagger or club held above her head. This wedding custom, too, has a religious basis. The household gods of the bride's family have become exceedingly jealous of the bride, because by marrying she has united herself to another family and will now worship other ancestors, abandoning her own. These jealous godlets realize that the best time to enter her new home and to cause countless harm is simultaneously with the bride. Fortunately, these household gods are afraid of daggers.[114] Among the Georgian mountaineers, a mother after having given birth to a child will keep a sword under the pillow as a protection against aerial spirits.[115] Spirits are afraid of the sword for several reasons—at least such is our conjecture. The God of Iron, of the Sword, and of the Hearth-Chain is one and the same god, called Safa. This sword ceremony may perhaps insure Safa's protection against jealous godlets. It may also insure the protection of the departed because *iron* is a means of contacting ancestors. In Ossetia on the "feast of the dedication of clothing" clothes are consecrated and sent to the netherworld by means of an iron knife.[116] The Ingushi get in contact with their departed by means of iron tongs.[117]

(8) The other marriage ceremonies are likewise mainly pastoral in character: horse-racing, submission to the husband, wishes for a rich progeny but always with a disproportion of "nine boys to every blue-eyed girl." Finally, the long elaborate and expensive wedding itself is typical of pastoral peoples.

There are, however, a few traces of a so-called mother-right culture. The rôle played by the mother-in-law in the ceremonies, as we have stressed *(supra*, p. 125), is indeed not inconsistent with the position of the mother of the household in a patriarchal family, but, we must admit that their astounding importance gives them a suspiciously matriarchal colouring: in the ceremonies described, it is the Lesghian mother who welcomes the bride into the house as if she were the head of the family. It is the mother who holds her by the hand as she crosses the threshold. It is the mother's brother who led the bride's horse in the Ingiloi procession from her home to that of her groom. It is the mother who puts the honey into the mouth of the bride as a sign that the bride has a sweet life ahead of her under such an amiable mistress as her mother-in-law. And we should not forget that in the Lesghian engagement it was the mother who presented the engagement gifts which concluded the betrothal contract.[118]

We cannot conclude this chapter without briefly refuting some of Kovalevskij's assumptions. Like so many anthropologists of his day, he was inclined to find traces of an epoch older than that of patriarchy, and older than that of

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[114] For the custom among the Ossetes see Kovalevskij, *Coutume contemp.*, pp. 170 f.

[115] Cf. Reinegg, *op. cit.*, II, p. 112 f.

[116] Kokiev, *Slepovye soeružeinija*, (Vladikavkaz, 1928), p. 38.

[117] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, II, p. 120.

[118] *Supra*, p. 103.

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of the women of Avaria as a very miserable one indeed. A woman, he tells us, is regarded as nothing more than a "work-animal." The men prefer this sort of "domestic beast" because she can stand much more than a horse or an ox; the only difference between her and a domestic animal is that she eats bread while an animal is satisfied with hay.[43] An ideal wife in the eyes of the Avars is one that is robust and, above all, very diligent.[44] L'vov goes on to call the husband a "heartless tyrant." He may get himself a second wife and regard the first as his slave, and woe to this poor miserable slave-wife if she does not bear a child before the newcomer! Endless jeers and ridicule are all that she can expect! By moving into the house of her husband, she becomes a servant of her mother-in-law, who does only the easy jobs, leaving the disagreeable and difficult tasks to her daughter-in-law.[45] The Dido,[46] Botlikh,[47] Kaitago-Tabassaranians[48] and the other Lesghians do not differ from the Avars.[49] In Daghestan, "it is derogatory for a man to carry anything less dignified than a gun."[50] While the husband stands about and gossips at the local mosque or putters with his gun, the wife must slave from morn till night. The husband, of course, does the sowing, makes the hay, threshes, sheers the sheep, builds houses;[51] but these jobs are not sufficient to keep him busy all year round. The wife does most of the harvesting, and, as Svěčin puts it, "brings half of the grain on her shoulders, leaving the other half for the donkey."[52] She has to cut the grass for the animals, care for the horses, cook, weave, milk the cows, mind the children, do the usual housework, set the cakes of cow-dung out to dry, clean the wool, spin, and fetch water.[53] Even the small girls of the family must take part in all these tasks. Frequently one can see nine- to ten-year-old girls carrying unbelievably heavy jugs of water, while boys as old as they, if not older, sit around and amuse themselves.[54]

The SOUTHERN CAUCASIANS. Among the Khevsurs[55] and the Svans[56] it is again the female sex that must bear practically the whole burden of family work.

The traveller will frequently witness the typically Caucasian scene "of women working and men loafing" also in OSSETIA.[57] The men do the plough-

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[43] L'vov, "Domašnjaja i semejnaja žizn Dagestanskich gorcev Avarskago plemeni," SSKG, III (1870), p. 11, *note*.
[44] L'vov, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
[45] L'vov, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
[46] Merzbacher, *Aus den Hochregionen des Kaukasus*, II, p. 455.
[47] Erckert, *op. cit.*, p. 284; K. N. Rossikov, "Poězdka v Čečnju i Nagornyj Dagestan," ZKO, XIII (1884), pp. 247.
[48] Amirov, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
[49] Amirov, "Sredi gorcev sěvernago Dagestana," SSKG, VII (1873), p. 48, claims that the Lak community of Batsa-Khari is an exception to this general rule.
[50] Abercromby, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
[51] Nansen, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
[52] Svěčin, "Očerk narodonaselenija, nravov i obyčaev Dagestancev," ZKO, II (1853), p. 63.
[53] Svěčin, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
[54] Svěčin, *l. c.*
[55] Eristov, "O Tušino-Pšavo-Chevsurskom Okrugě," ZKO, III (1855), p. 113.
[56] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, ii, p. 109.
[57] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, p. 69.

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ing transporting and selling the produce, build houses, and do the heavy work; however, this is far from being a full-time employment. The women, on the contrary, are busy all day long: they must milk the cows, fetch water from the well and wood from the forest, and, of course, look after the children. If a man were ever to do any of these jobs, he would become the laughing-stock of the village.[58]

## § 3. SPECIAL RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF WOMEN

Despite all that we have said about the disadvantageous and even slavish condition of the woman in North Caucasia and neighbouring territory, the women enjoy certain rights and privileges which must not be overlooked. For example, throughout the Caucasus she alone is the *mistress* of the house.[59]

The NORTHWESTERN CAUCASIAN (as well as the Chechen), according to an *adat* of the Black Sea Line, Kuban and Terek Territories (§ 174), will permit no one to say anything unfavourable about his wife. The husband will tolerate an insult against his own father or mother, or even against himself, sooner than hear a single abusive word said against his wife.[60] When a daughter is married off into another sib the family does not lose all interest in her; on the contrary, it is this very interest that is her surest protection against ill-treatment. As we shall see in the following chapter, the husband who unjustly takes the life of his wife is infallibly avenged by her relatives. Moreover, the woman enjoys considerable freedom owing to the fact that her husband is frequently absent, either hunting or on a raid.[61] And even in the sixteenth century, as we read in G. B. Ramusio's *Raccolta di viaggi* (1583), the wife had a firm will of her own, which her husband usually respected. In a way, women are considered sacred: blood-vengeance will never take place before a woman,[62] and hence, she is an asylum like the sacred hearth-chain (*supra*, p. 127). The wife, or to be more exact, the mother of the household, is the sole mistress of the house and as such may arrange things within her little kingdom as she pleases and may even give orders to others.[63] In Abkhazia formerly a woman of a privileged class even had the right to preside at certain religious ceremonies, direct civil affairs, and be the leader in a raid.[64]

The NORTHEASTERN CAUCASIAN does not lose interest in his daughter after her marriage, and therefore he too compels her husband to

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[58] Curtin, *Osetini, etnografičeskij očerk*, p 39; Merzbacher, *op. cit.*, I, p. 204; see Hahn, "Fo dolinach Coroka, Urucha i Ardona," SMOMPK, XXV (1898), p. 32.

[59] Ladyženskij, "Zur Erforschung der Rechtsgewohnheiten der Bergvölker des Kaukasus," *Zeitsch. f. Ethnologie*, LXII (1930), p. 231.

[60] Leontovič, II, p. 254, § 175.

[61] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 201.

[62] Mourier, *Guide au Caucase*, I, p. 136.

[63] Castagné, "Le Droit coutumier familial des montagnards du Caucase," Révue des études islamiques, 1929, No. 2, p. 272.

[64] K. Mačavriani, "Někotoryja čerty iz žizni Abchazcev. Položenie ženščiny v Abchazii," SMOMPK, IV (1884), No. 2, p. 41; P. I. Kovalevskij, *Kavkaz, Narody Kavkaza*, pp. 34 f.

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562 [606] respect her rights. Chechen women enjoy considerably more freedom than do the women in Daghestan.[65] But even the Lesghian women are not entirely without rights. We have seen how in matters regarding engagement and marriage the mother plays an important part. This may be a vestige of an ancient mother-right culture.

The SOUTHERN CAUCASIANS. Despite the slavish condition to which the South Caucasian *adats* condemn the female sex, the women are given certain unusual privileges, enjoyed not even by the menfolk. In Khevsuria[66] and Svanetia,[67] just as in W. Circassia[68] and OSSETIA,[69] a woman is able to put an end to a savage duel by a mere word or by her very presence. The Svan need but touch her and he is, at least temporarily, secure even in the presence of his bitterest enemy.[70]

Finally, we should not forget that the women are the official owners of their engagement and wedding gifts, and if divorced, also of the *kebin*.[71]

## § 4. PROBLEMS

562 628 [171] The two main problems of this chapter are: (1) Why must the women do most of the work? (2) Why is the status of women throughout the Caucasus so unfavourable? These questions can be answered only in the light of our entire study and in the light of the entire culture of the North Caucasians. Her unfavourable and still privileged position as mistress of the house and as an asylum for any murderer resembles very closely the condition of the women in a society such as that found among pastoral nomads of Asia. It is indeed difficult to determine just in how far the pastoral nomads of Asia are responsible for the status of women in North Caucasus and in how far the general economic conditions among the mountaineers have contributed to the position of the female sex. Here we wish to point out one important contributing factor, raids and blood-feuds. By no means do we maintain that this is the *most* important or the *only* factor; it is, however, *a very important* one. Any mountaineer may object to the accusation that he is an idler by saying: "We men are constantly exposing our lives for our wives and children, while the women are able to work in peace and security. How can we be soldiers and farmers at the same time?" Amirov heard the same argument used in Kaitago-Tabassaran, where formerly there was hardly a man in all Kaitago that had not killed or cooperated in killing another man. As a consequence of feuds, the men had to be constantly on the lookout, constantly hiding, and frequently

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[65] B. Plaetschke, *Die Tschetschenen*, p. 33.
[66] Essad-Bey, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
[67] Dirr, FT, p. 43.
[68] Mourier, *Guide au Caucase*, I, p. 136.
[69] N. F. Takoeva, "Kosta Chetagurov — narodnyj poet osetin etnograf-kavkazoved," SE, 1949, No. 2, p. 129.
[70] Dirr, *l. c.*
[71] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, I, p. 143.

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the Caucasus a father is forbidden to manifest his affection for his child. The Cherkess is forbidden even to speak of a child of a person present.[7]

Similar *adats* forbid a couple to appear together before their parents or parents-in-law for a year after marriage,[8] and among the Abkhaz, even longer.[9]

The NORTHEASTERN CAUCASIANS. These rules of avoidance are found also among the Chechens, with only accidental differences. After marriage the groom must leave his wife and family and live with some neighbours or relatives for two to three weeks.[10] But even afterwards, when he returns, a certain law of separation must be observed. Reineggs reporting on the customs in the eighteenth century mentions that the husband did not share a common room with his wife; the men, he tells us, lived apart from the children and the female members of the family.[11] Another *adat* forbids a husband to eat with his wife in the presence of strangers.[12] And even in strictest privacy he will never speak directly to her in the second person: he usually will turn aside somewhat and instead of saying "Give me," he will say, "I am in need of."[13]

An Ingush father is not only forbidden to carry or fondle his child in public, but is not even allowed to call it by its name,[14] when others are present.

Jakovlev assures us that one can meet Ingushi today who have not seen their mothers-in-law for fifteen years after the wedding,[15] for to do so would be a serious violation of an Ingush custom. A wife is forbidden to mention the name of a first cousin of her husband in the presence of her parents- or brothers-in-law.[16] A husband may never inquire about his wife's relatives.[17] He will not speak with his wife in the presence of his parents or older brothers.[18] According to Dubrovin, a wife is strictly forbidden to speak with her father-in-law or any near male relative of her husband for a certain time after the wedding. She may speak with her mother-in-law only after a number of months have elapsed.[19]

There is also a certain avoidance observed by the husband and wife among the mountain tribes of Daghestan. A Lesghian, for example, will never put his arm around his wife while dancing. Such signs of intimacy in the presence of others would be unthinkable.[20]

We have already mentioned the example of how a certain Boulat-khan brought on himself the contempt of a group of men of Andi for carrying his son

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[7] Pallas, *l. c.*
[8] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 186.
[9] Byhan, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
[10] Cf. Jakovlev, *Ingući*, p. 56.
[11] Reineggs, *op. cit.*, I, p. 41.
[12] Leontovič, II, p. 254, § 170.
[13] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 438.
[14] Grabovskij, "Inguši, ich žizn i obyčai," SSKG, IX (1876), p. 49.
[15] Jakovlev, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 57.
[16] Jakovlev, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
[17] *ibid.*
[18] *ibid.*
[19] *Istorija*, I, i, p. 434.
[20] Nansen, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

in his arms; to make up for the transgression of the *adat* forbidding public manifestation of affection for one's children, he took out his dagger, crying, "I love my son, but you shall see also that I don't mind killing him," and if the men had not succeeded in calming him, he would have actually killed the child.[21]

It is indeed striking that we do not find the parent-in-law avoidances among the Lesghians; at least we have not found any reports in this regard. Parent-in-law avoidances would be quite impossible among the Lesghians, owing to the rule of endogamy.[22]

The SOUTHERN CAUCASIANS. Among the mountain tribes of Georgia the bride and groom, after having spent three days together,[23] are obliged to separate, the groom remaining with his parents and the bride returning to her family. The period of separation, according to Eristov, was a fortnight, according to Seidlitz, depending on agreement,[24] and according to Kosven, "for some weeks or years."[25] In ancient Imeretia the newly-weds would live at the bride's house for a week, after which the young man returned to his father's house, while his wife remained with her family for a year.[26] During the period of separation the husband might visit his wife only secretly. On her return to her husband she did not share a common room with him.[27] A Pshav couple may not call each other by name; instead they use the words "Man!" and "Woman!"[28] Similarly, the wife may not call any of her husband's male relatives by name.[29] In Svanetia one may not inquire about the health of the wife of another person unless related to her.[30] A Svan will never permit his wife to sit down beside him; and, in general, he is very reluctant to converse with her.[31] In Khevsuria a father may not carry his child in his arms or say a single friendly word to it in the presence of others.[32]

The OSSETES. In Ossetia the husband must live at the groomsman's house for a whole month after the wedding. He is forbidden to appear before his father, older members of the household, or any older relatives and may visit his wife only secretly.[33] As soon as the young wife becomes pregnant she returns to her family and stays there till the child is born.[34]

[21] *Supra*, pp. 149 f.

[22] *Supra*, pp. 51 f.

[23] Nansen, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[24] Eristov, *op. cit.*, p. 110. Seidlitz, "Gemeinde- und Familienleben der Chewsuren," *Das Ausland*, 1891, No. 16, p. 320.

[25] M. O. Kosven, "Perežitki matriarchata u narodov Kavkaza," SE, 1936, No. 4—5, p. 217.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Eristov, *op. cit.*, p. 111. See also Eichwald, *Reise auf dem Kaspischen Meer und in den Kaukasus*, Vol. I, Part II, p. 204.

[28] Makalatija, "Iz starogo narodnogo byta Pšavov," SE, 1938, No. 1, p. 109.

[29] Hahn, *Bilder aus dem Kaukasus*, p. 82.

[30] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, ii, p. 109.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] *Supra*, p. 150.

[33] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, p. 269.

[34] Hahn, "Die Täler der 'Grossen Ljachwa' und Ksanka (ksan) und das südliche Ossetien," *Globus*, LXXXVIII (1905), p. 24. It is worthy of note that the Kurds and the Armenians

## TABLE 18

### Rules of Marital, Parental, and Kinship Avoidance

| RULES | Abkhaz | Cherkess | Chechens | Lesghians | Mountaineers of Georgia | Ossetes | Karachai |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Bride and groom must live separately after wedding | For a year or till first child | For a year or till first child | For two or three weeks | No | Three to fourteen days | For a month after the wedding | Live together one month, then separate |
| 2. Bride returns to her own family after the wedding | Bride lives with strangers | Bride lives with strangers | No, but husband must live elsewhere 2 to 3 weeks | No | Yes | Yes, goes to own family some months after wedding | Two months to two years with own family |
| 3. Husband may visit wife during this period only secretly | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 4. Married couples may not appear together in public or before strangers | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | | | |
| 5. When living in same house after period of separation the couple may not share common quarters | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes | |
| 6. May not mention name of husband | | May not do so before others | Husband avoids speaking directly to wife even in private | No | Wife may not call husband by name and vice versa | | |
| 7. Prohibition to manifest love for one's own child before others | Yes | Yes. Also may not speak of child of person present | Yes. Father may not carry or fondle it | Yes | Yes. May not carry or say friendly word to child | Yes. Rule is very strict | |
| 8. Husband must avoid parents-in-law | For several years | For a year after marriage | Husband may never speak to mother-in-law | No | | Yes | |
| 9. Wife must avoid older male relatives of husband (or husband must avoid relatives of wife) | | | Wife may not mention name of husband's first-cousin | No | May not call them by name | Yes | |
| 10. The couple may not be seen together by parents or parents-in-law | For a year after marriage | For a year after marriage | Yes | | | Yes, during period of separation | Yes, during period of separation |

591
585
606
603

8: Lužbetak E-4 (no date) 1951 RH1 Caucasia RH1



trace of this epoch. He goes on to say that the *kalym* was originally a form of bloodwite demanded for bride-stealing, which later evolved into a means of compensating the family of the bride for the loss of a worker. Although Ladyženskij's interpretations are generally good, we connot agree with him in this particular point. It has never been proven that bride-stealing was the original form of marriage anywhere in the world. Moreover, it seems to be much more probable that bride-stealing resulted from the practice of bride purchase rather than vice versa. That *kalym* evolved from bloodwite is very improbable, especially in the Caucasus, because reconciliation by means of bloodwite seems to be a relatively recent substitution for actual blood vengeance.

(2) The various husband-wife avoidances, such as not mentioning the name of one's husband or wife, not using the second person, avoiding all conversation in public, etc. may be an expression of the superior position of the male sex in Caucasian society (cf. *supra*, pp. 152—159).[40]

(3) The parent and parent-in-law avoidance, the obligatory avoidance of older male relatives of the husband, the prohibition of inquiring about the health of the wife's or husband's relatives, and similar practices are difficult to explain.

Parent-in-law avoidances are certainly among the most universal practices known to man. In fact, this form of avoidance is so universal that Lowie does not hesitate to write, " From the extremely wide range of parent-in-law avoidance, the absolute universality of these rules might be conjectured on the ground that, where unrecorded, the customs have merely eluded notice."[41] In Australia, for example, " it was formerly death for a man to speak to his mother-in-law."[42] In New Britain if a man were speaking accidently with his mother-in-law, the horror of the " crime " would most likely lead to suicide.[43]

The interpretation of parent-in-law taboos has baffled all ethnologists, and a satisfactory answer still has not been given. The parent-in-law avoidance has been connected with exogamy and bride-capture ;[44] it has been considered a vestige of matriarchy, an expression of awe for the mistress of the household ;[45] it has also been considered as a means to prevent improper intercourse. We may have here a case of convergence, based more on human psychology than on any particular institution ; nor is there any reason to attribute the same cause for the practice in all parts of the world. This is but another important ethnological problem that waits to be solved.

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[40] The Caucasians seem to be of the opinion that separation is the best means of fostering conjugal love (cf. Leontovič, II, pp. 254 f, § 176).

[41] *Primitive Society*, p. 88.

[42] Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South East Australia*, p. 267.

[43] H. H. Romilly, " The Islands of the New Britain Group," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, n. s. IX, p. 9.

[44] Cf. A. H. Post, " Ueber die Sitte, nach welcher Verlobte und Ehegatten ihre gegenseitigen Verwandten meiden," *Globus*, LXVII (1895), pp. 176 f.

[45] Cf. R. Briffault, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 266 f.